



COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY AND COMMERCE

COMMITTEE ON
SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0509

April 29, 2022

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
H-307 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
Committee of Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger:

I am requesting funding in the amount of \$1,180,000 for Strategies for Supporting Youth in the Community in the fiscal year 2023 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill.

The project sponsor for this project is the Contra Costa County, Probation Department, Office of Reentry & Justice, and the project will be located in Contra Costa County.

This project seeks funding to deliver training sessions among all departments and offices with law enforcement duties in the County. The training program, based on research in adolescent development and psychology, was designed to supplement standard law enforcement training and increase officers' understanding of young people. Training sessions highlight the differences between youth and adult cognitions, including that youth cognitions are more likely to be "hot" and that they have the tendency to assert their autonomy. Role-play exercises with youth from local communities will allow young people to share their perceptions of officers' responses and reinforce the differences between youth and adult perceptions and behaviors to social and contextual cues.

Participants are taught skills and techniques to respond to young people in a manner that recognizes but redirects bad behavior, as well as strategies to de-escalate emotionally heated or aggressive encounters to minimize violence and ultimately, reduce arrests. In addition, participants are taught to identify compromised youth behavior that might indicate mental health problems, substance use, trauma, or some combination thereof. Lastly, portions of the training focus on factors that commonly affect youth and their behavior, such as neighborhood demographics and cultural messaging. This important aspect of the training program speaks to the potential for mitigating any racial disparities in the arrests of young people.

Most police academies devote less than 1% of training to interactions with young people (approximately three hours). Further, to date, the Commission on Peace Officer Standards & Training (POST) does not offer any supplemental training on the neuroscience of young people

and the developmental differences between young people and adults. Given that the arrest and incarceration of juveniles fails to decrease recidivism, utilizing taxpayer funds to finance an evidence-based program that supports public safety and improves community relations with law enforcement is an appropriate use of taxpayer dollars that will benefit all communities in Contra Costa County.

I certify that neither I nor my immediate family has any financial interest in this project.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jerry McNerney", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress